

**FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**March 21, 2017**

**5:00 p.m.**

**Spencer Borden Elementary School**

**1400 President Avenue**

**Fall River, MA 02720**

A roll call at 5:02 p.m. showed:

Mr. Coogan: Present

Mrs. Panchley: Present

Mr. Martins: Present

Also present were Superintendent Malone, Mr. Kevin Almeida, Principal Chris Audette, Principal Cathy Carvalho, Principal Jean Facchiano, Ms. Jocelyn LeMaire, Principal Alicia Lisi, Mr. Ken Pacheco, Principal Brian Raposo, Mr. Tom Rose, Principal Lourdes Santiago, and Principal Anne-Marie Scott.

Mr. Martins read the Open Meeting Law. A salute to the flag followed.

**1. Fall River Public Schools Budget**

Superintendent Malone announced that there were five schools who would be presenting their budgets at this meeting. This is a unique and new process for the Fall River Public Schools. They are using zero-based budgeting which allowed them to capture and include 32 positions in the budget. There had to be some consolidation and cost containments in order to bring forward a budget that represents a 1% increase in net school spending. They were also able to meet their goals of reducing elementary class size, invest in technology, and bringing forward a budget that protects employees. He included a dashboard of each school in the School Committee binders which shows the current state of each school. The second page is the zero-based budgeting cost model for each school based on FY18's numbers. Each principal will explain what they propose to do. In zero-based budgeting, as opposed to traditional budgeting, they're not coming forward with a wish list. Anything extra would involve trade off. They are already over net school spending by 1%. Fixed costs really hurt them but, due to zero-based budgeting, they were really able to find and recoup about \$1.3 million.

**2. Budget for Group 1 Elementary Schools (Greene, Watson, Tansey, Silvia, Viveiros)**

Silvia

Mr. Martins asked Principal Facchiano to explain her budget. Principal Facchiano stated that staffing will remain the same as it is now with the exception of a couple of conversions. They would like to convert two Pre-K paras to a K para and a 1 para. There are a couple of classrooms that have two Pre-K paras. With class sizes in K and 1 at 26, 27, and 28, all K and 1 should have a paraprofessional within the classroom. With the loss of two interventionists last year, it is extremely important that they have paraprofessionals to help with intervention and students with extra needs, especially in ELA. This year they are working on strengthening their ELA and math instruction in K and 1 for a more rigorous instruction. They're doing a lot more close reading. They feel as though it is really making an impact on

student learning in K and 1. They've strengthened their STEM which is running in all Pre-K to 5 classes. They want to continue that work for next year.

Mrs. Panchley asked if she would rather have a para in K and 1 than an interventionist. Principal Facchiano explained that the structure in how they used their interventionist this year is different from last year. Last year, they had three interventionists who did a lot of pull out as well as push into the classrooms and they serviced a wider range of grade levels last year. The majority of the interventionist's work is in Grade 1 and mostly all of her work is pushing into classrooms. She's supporting right from within the classroom. She thinks paras are a good way to go with proper training and in a way that is most effective for students at K and 1 in Reading.

Mr. Coogan said that he would like to see a current class size average listed in the dashboard for each school. Principal Facchiano gave him the numbers for Silvia. For kindergarten, there's an average of 27 students; Grade 1 has an average of 26 students; Grade 2 has an average of 24 students; and Grade 3 has an average of 28 students. Superintendent Malone directed Mr. Coogan to the yellow page in the binder and said that those class averages reflect taking forward the class they currently have. All kindergarten classes are at 26 because they included three TBD class size reduction positions for K-3 and are trying to figure out where to put them. Based on the math, they can have all classes K-3 at no more than 26. That requires them to move some kids. In the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade at Silvia, they will have to move a child or two because there are more than 26 kids. One of the TBD kids will probably be on the north end and two will be on the south end. It will be based on where the need is.

Mr. Coogan noted that test scores from Silvia went up. He said that he will support whatever Principal Facchiano needs to run her school.

Mr. Martins stated that he had the CPI graph for every school. He said that Silvia is close to meeting their targets for ELA but Science is a little low. Principal Facchiano admitted that there was a dip in math and science last year in Grade 5. It has been a push this year to strengthen Grade 5 math and science as well as in all levels. She expects to see an increase in both math and science.

Mr. Martins asked if she could repeat how she would utilize paraprofessionals in the classroom. Principal Facchiano thinks that paraprofessionals are important in the classroom. They lost two interventionists last year which was detrimental in supporting children in K and 1 and struggling learners in 2. She feels that it's extremely important that every kindergarten class and every 1<sup>st</sup> grade class have a paraprofessional. There are 26 children with a great amount of needs and it's extremely challenging for one person to meet the needs of 26 5-year-olds.

Mr. Martins asked if she will maintain her ranking of a Level 2 school. Principal Facchiano said that she expects to go up to a Level 1. They were a Level 1 school for five years.

### Viveiros

Superintendent Malone stated that there was a change that was made this week from the budget that was presented because they are making real-time decisions. Principal Scott stated that they remained a Level 1 school for three consecutive years. Their student population has grown over the past year. They have added Newcomer classrooms to their building this year along with their current 5 subseparate special education classes. They're an extended day school and have ELL Newcomers in Grades 1 and 2, a split

class that they just recently opened. They also have Newcomers in Grades 3 and 4 which is a split class that was opened last year. They don't have Pre-K or Gifted and Talented. There have been several additions made to their budgets because of a need. One of them is a Grade 5 position because there has been an increase in students in Grade 5. If they didn't add that position, they would be at 29 students in their Grade 5 classrooms. They also need extra space in the classroom for their inclusion model. They have an addition of an ESL classroom teaching position and Newcomer room teaching position and Newcomer paraprofessional position. They also brought on a kindergarten paraprofessional that was on a grant that they are now having to take in on the operational budget.

In Grade 1, they have five classroom teachers. The numbers are showing that they're only going to require four classroom teachers. However, the numbers are increasing at Grade 3 so they are going to need an additional classroom teacher for Grade 3. She converted the Grade 1 teacher position to Grade 3 teacher position. They are also converting their school psychologist position into a bilingual school adjustment counselor position. They are currently the only school with a school psychologist on site. An addition of a school adjustment counselor can service the needs of special education students. School adjustment counselors are on Grid C on IEP whereas a school psychologist is not so they can attend meetings and be there to support students as needed. On the operating budget, they needed to have some cost containment eliminations. One was a behavior therapist position and the other was a math interventionist position.

They have a bunch of positions in the grants. One of them is an open ELA department head position. They did not hire for that position this year. She really wanted to bring back the math interventionist position. They were able to move the math interventionist position into the grants with the elimination of the ELA department head position.

Mrs. Panchley asked Mr. Almeida if you could pay for a math interventionist on an amount if you were paying for one of the operating budget. He confirmed that you could. Superintendent Malone agreed and said that you couldn't pay for a classroom teacher that you had before.

Principal Scott said that the only other conversion that they had was to convert a technology teacher into a STEM position. Mrs. Panchley was wary about that because she remembered that Spencer Borden got rid of a technology teacher last year and the School Committee voted 6-1 to bring the technology teacher back to Spencer Borden. She doesn't want to see that happen again. Principal Scott said that right now they are part of the STEM Initiation Grant. As part of that, they've done some work around applications for the STEM grant. There is a lot of technology involved in those applications. They would still be in the computer lab. On the operating budget, there were some transfers to Silvia. Those were transfers specific for special education. Superintendent Malone clarified that they were going to have three second language Newcomer Strands next year. One is at Viveiros. Simultaneously, one of the SPED strands will be aligned at Silvia. This gives them greater alignment.

Mr. Martins asked, in regards to the open ELA department head position, if they were looking to fill that position. Principal Scott said that they were not and they were planning to convert that position to the math interventionist position. Mr. Martins asked if the ELA department head was a listed person on their staff. Superintendent Malone answered that there was no one in that position right now. Principal Scott thought it was more important to have a math interventionist. Mr. Martins explained that, in the past, schools were assigned staffing. Unless the School Committee took action to eliminate that staffing

position, it remained on the books. Superintendent Malone explained that the way that zero-based budgeting worked was, whatever budget the Committee approves, including the staffing within that budget, is what it will be for FY18. Anything that is not on that budget is no longer part of the staffing. If down the road, the school wants this department head, they'll need to figure out how to pay for it.

Mr. Martins said that, according to Viveiros' CPI, he noticed that they were a little low in meeting their targets. He is not sure what the Department of Ed does with schools who do not meet their target. Superintendent Malone explained that because they have moved from NCLB to America Achieves and now ESEA, the State has yet to figure out how they're going to use the accountability system. They have been told that they're moving away from CPI to a more PPI-based growth methodology. Many schools this year will be held harmless because they're switching assessments. Mr. Martins said that for the past several years he's been arguing for the use of growth versus CPI. He doesn't understand what student growth and improvement means. Superintendent Malone said that he will work on getting an answer from the Department of Ed on what they are doing in regards to accountability and will get that answer to the School Committee.

Mr. Martins asked Principal Scott if she was going to maintain her Level I status. Principal Scott said that she's going to try and added that her students are well prepared. Mr. Martins asked if there were students in any of her classrooms who were struggling and who might not be on the same grade level as other students in the classroom. He wondered if she considered combining some of those kids in a non-graded class which covered the same material but gave the kids more individualized attention. Principal Scott answered that they do have those types of students and they have interventions in place to address the needs of those students. They look at the cycle every six weeks to identify those students and do flexible groupings to make sure that their student are best placed in what they need. Mr. Martins asked if they have any dual teaching going on in the classroom. Principal Scott said that they have inclusion teachers at every grade level which are helping to support their special needs students. They do some co-teaching with specific classroom teachers as part of their model.

Mrs. Panchley asked if there was any ELA support since they don't have a department head. Principal Scott said that they have an ELA coach.

### Greene

Principal Santiago explained that the budget for Greene was pretty much staying the same except for the fact that they are losing three paraprofessionals. Superintendent Malone clarified that there are two paraprofessionals at Greene and two at Spencer Borden that they were holding based on student need. They don't know where these paras will be going yet. Principal Santiago said that there was also a kindergarten para that was under a grant that they moved to their general budget.

Mr. Coogan asked about the 5% of students who were getting extra services. Principal Santiago highlighted the positive that 89% of their students have not had any behavioral referrals. Those 5% are students who require more wraparound services. Mr. Coogan asked what she does for those students. Principal Santiago answered that they do FBAs for the students so that they have a sense of what their needs are so that they may receive services from student support. The student may be paired with another class. Some 5<sup>th</sup> grade students go into the 1<sup>st</sup> grade classroom and read to the children. They also have 4<sup>th</sup> grade students helping with 1<sup>st</sup> grade recess. They contact outside agencies for counseling. They also do alternate recess plans.

Mr. Coogan asked if they were going to improve their test scores. Principal Santiago explained that they were working hard and using interventionists to the best of their ability.

Mr. Martins pointed out that Greene's CPI was below the target level. He asked Superintendent Malone to explain the loss of paras. Superintendent Malone explained that they had four paras who were not eliminated, they just haven't been assigned yet. He understands that the Greene School is a concern. He knows that he's going to have to provide support to them. He's going to make the decision over the next several months. They are beginning to look at schools in clusters. For example, how can the Greene School work with the Letourneau School or the Watson School. One or two of those positions may end up back at Greene. Mr. Martins stated that well-trained paraprofessionals are an asset to schools.

### Watson

Superintendent Malone started by saying that one of the difficult things about turnaround work is that the resources sunset. The SRG grant goes away. There are positions in the proposed budget that they had because of the funding. The school made the decision that they want to keep their people. In order to do that, they are giving up their instructional time by an hour.

Principal Carvalho said that she believed that this would be Watson's last year as a Level 4 school. Every year, their scores have gone up. When she took over, the CPIs were in the 40s and 50s. They've moved a lot in three years. She thinks a lot of it has to do with the fact that she's been able to keep the same staff. Three of her staff were being paid by the redesign grant. They had to make a decision between time and people. They've created a schedule for next year without extended day. They were previously using the half hour in the morning for responsive classroom time. The other time was for an intervention period. In Years 1 and 2, the majority of their kids were on interventions. When the building was evaluated, it was noted that there was an absence of Tier I and level support at Watson. They have two coaches in ELA and math, two interventionists in ELA and math, and six paraprofessionals to support students. The coaching was all new staff and they had to learn the curriculum because a lot of them were first-year teachers. This year, they only had one new teacher. Coaches are pushing into classrooms now and pulling out students during intervention. They have a support interventionist and a coach.

One of the three people who was being paid by the Redesign Grant was a STEM teacher who pushes into K-5 classes to teach math and science. Every classroom has science every day. Science teachers teach one period, the STEM teacher pushes in one period, then the kids go to the technology lab and get science there. They're really trying to strengthen their science. The other position was a para. She has a para in each K classroom and each 1<sup>st</sup> grade classroom, one in the language base classroom and the sixth para was part of the redesign money. This para does intervention work with 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, enrichment, and sign language. The third position was the student support coordinator. She comes with a lot of knowledge that the school adjustment counselor doesn't have because of the nature of her work. She has a lot of contacts in the Fall River area. She already knows a lot of the families. She does Student at a Glance and meets with every parent and looks at four domains and tries to make sure they're getting help in all those areas. She meets with teachers to discuss student issues.

The only new position she asked for was a half-time ELL and a half-time inclusion special education teacher. Her two current special education teachers cover three grades. Fifty percent of their caseload is in the C Grid but it's in the same class that needs the B Grid so she can't be pulling out and pushing in at

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the same time. They're up to 44 ELLs and 30 of them need extensive English support. Superintendent Malone said that they negotiated with the Fonseca MOU with the FREA for these joint positions.

Principal Carvalho said that the staff is concerned with how the new assessment is going to affect a Level 4 school. They are working on moving on from being a Level 4 school.

Mr. Martins asked Superintendent Malone what schools he was concerned about. Superintendent Malone said that Watson and Fonseca are his priorities because they are Level 4 schools. He was also concerned about Talbot, Henry Lord, and Greene. Mr. Martins asked where the schools with the greatest need were located. Superintendent Malone said that they were in the flint to the south end. Mr. Martins said that he's a firm believer in staffing based on the needs of students where every student is equally important. Superintendent Malone assured Mr. Martins that they would be looking at all the grant funds at one of the upcoming meetings. They don't have much flexibility as far as grants go. Their ability to attach more funds to specific schools are tied up. There would need to be some tradeoffs. Mr. Martins countered that it was staffing based on the needs of students. When one is writing a grant, one can look for student support like dual teaching. He hasn't seen that being used. Superintendent Malone said that he was looking at the Title I budget so that they can have money set aside so that they can work with the Committee to assign the money once data comes out.

Mrs. Panchley pointed out, for the record, that Silvia is on an Extended Learning Time Grant from the State that is a renewable grant for that school and can't be given to another school. Superintendent Malone confirmed that that was true and that there were three schools on a state grant: Kuss, Silvia, and Viveiros.

#### Tansey

Superintendent Malone said that Principal Audette was in his first year as principal. They trained all the other principals on zero-based budgeting based on the Tansey model. It proved the point that the zero-based budgeting model gives principals real control over their dollars and it allows for innovation like shared positions.

Principal Audette stated that the budget that Tansey was proposing was the same budget as last year. They are not proposing any new positions. They are trying to do some new innovative and out-of-the-box things around more personalized learning models. To accomplish that, they'd like to use more technology. Part of that is the opening of their new makerspace which is opening next week. They're ultimately wanting to move to a 1:1 Student to Chromebook model. Science is an area of concern. There are three members of his team that are on a committee to redesign the curriculum in science.

Superintendent Malone said that Tansey will have the first makerspace in the system. RPA is the second. He's envisioning a makerspace in every building within the next three years. They are hoping to get some help from Amazon and other foundations to do this. They have a Life Sciences grant but that doesn't cover something like this.

Mr. Martins said that he doesn't understand what a makerspace is. Superintendent Malone explained that it's a room that has 3D printers, glue guns, and tubes and kids can go in and make and build things. It's kind of like a research and development. Kids are getting an understanding of science by doing hands on learning.

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Mrs. Panchley asked where the makerspace is located. Principal Audette said that they have repurposed space in the library.

Mr. Martins asked if Principal Audette knew his CPI. Principal Audette said that he knew they were on an upward trajectory and are working on improving their CPI.

Superintendent Malone asked the Committee to set up a couple of more meetings so that they can discuss the budgets for the rest of the elementary schools, middle and K-8 schools, and secondary schools and departments.

**MOTION: Mrs. Panchley-Mr. Coogan: To adjourn.**

No discussion

All were in favor

None were opposed

Motion passed (6:23 p.m.)

Respectfully submitted,



Administrative Assistant

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Please note: A videotape/DVD of this meeting is on file in the School Committee Office and is available for review by contacting the Administrative Assistant for the School Committee Services